

“This plan also includes long overdue pay raises for state employees, teachers and community college faculty and also provides a cost of living adjustment for the state’s retirees,” said Easley. “We would not have been able to maintain our commitment to education over the past three years without the hard work and dedication of our state employees. I recognize and appreciate the sacrifices that have been made.”

Other items included in Easley’s proposed budget include full funding of Health Choice (CHIPs), resources to increase the number of school nurses available across the state, and funding for the Mental Health Trust fund. Funding for 14 new State Bureau of Investigation positions to help combat methamphetamine trafficking in North Carolina is also included, along with additional monies for crime victims. Public health and social services will also receive support to deal with meth labs. The plan also includes \$500,000 from the contingency and emergency fund for Reach Out to Communities (ROTC) to provide mortgage and loan assistance to military families that are in need of assistance due to the long deployment.

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